

Wray House
500 Market Street
Saltsburg
Indiana County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5426

HABS
PA,
32 SALT,
24-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, DC 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

WRAY HOUSE

HABS No. PA-5426

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PA.
32-SALT,
24 -

Location: 500 Market St., Saltsburg, Conemaugh Township, Indiana County, Pennsylvania.

Present Owner: John C. Shirley.

Present Use: Single-family residence.

Significance: Situated in a purely residential neighborhood of Saltsburg east of the commercial center and canal/rail route, this later nineteenth-century house reflects the movement toward greater proportions, but no less modest ornament in detached dwellings that typify mid- to late-nineteenth century construction.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: ca. 1860-70.
2. Original and subsequent owners: The following is an incomplete chain of title to the land on which the structure stands. Reference is to the Recorder of Deeds Office of the County of Indiana, Pennsylvania.

1817 Deed March 11, 1817, Volume 2, Page 840.
Daniel Wray
TO
Robert Wray

1868 Deed April 16, 1868, Volume A35, Page 87.
Robert Wray Sr., and wife Abigail
TO
John M. and Robert Wray Jr.

1869 Deed March 26, 1869, Volume A35 Page 529.
John M. and Anna Wray, Robert and Martha Wray Jr.
TO

Andrew Getty

1907 Will Sept. 11, 1907.

Andrew Getty

TO

Anna Belle Gregg (daughter)

3. Original plans and construction: No original plans or drawings have been located, however the two-story, rectangular block appears largely original.
 4. Alterations and additions: None of significance.
- B. Historical Context: Daniel and Robert Wray owned the property until 1868-69; they were early settlers to Saltsburg, appearing in the tax records for Conemaugh Township as early as 1807. The Wrays conveyed the land to Andrew Getty (born 1826), a Universalist minister, in 1868-69. Born in Conemaugh Township, the son of an Irish immigrant carpenter, Getty was a canal boatman, teacher, farmer, and flour miller. His primary occupation became religion, however, after spending two years studying theology under Reverend D. Bacon of Pittsburgh; Getty was ordained in 1862. In 1870 Getty organized the Universalist Church in Saltsburg, with a congregation of fifteen members; he also personally financed a meeting place. Getty's preaching established him as a local "missionary," of sorts. In a series of debates with Reverend A.A. Bunner in 1895, Getty maintained that mankind was not deemed to suffer eternal punishment if "dying in willful disobedience to the gospel of Christ" and that "all mankind shall finally be made holy and happy after this life."

For additional context, twenty-one reports on other buildings in Saltsburg may be consulted, as well as overview histories of the town of Saltsburg (HABS No. PA-5438) and of canal town development in Pennsylvania (HABS No. PA-5666). See also, Sara Amy Leach, ed., Two Historic Pennsylvania Canal Towns: Alexandria and Saltsburg (Washington, DC: Historica American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record, National Park Service, March 1989).

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: 500 Market St. is an extremely simple, frame, gable-front dwelling whose boxy, late-nineteenth-century form is highlighted by decorative window and porch elements.
2. Condition of fabric: Very good.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: About 30' x 34' (Sanborns).
2. Foundation: Stone, slightly banked.
3. Walls: Horizontal tongue-in-groove clapboard or weatherboard.
4. Structural system: Wood frame.
5. Porches: The front porch on the north facade is raised, the full width of the facade, one-story, with a flat or slightly hipped roof; the cornice has a zigzag woodwork pattern, features an ogee profile with squared columnar posts, Victorian bracing replete with pendants, and clapboard balustrade.

A full, one-story rear porch is raised with a shed roof, supported by three square posts and a partially enclosed west end.

6. Chimneys: There are two brick chimneys, somewhat centered along the ridge line.
7. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: The front door is located in the westernmost of the three bays; Flanking two-light sidelights with decorative glazing and a transom are framed by a pedimental wood surround. A modern door has been installed.

The rear door is located in the easternmost bay of the south facade and features decorative architrave molding.

- b. Windows: The three second-story and two first-floor bays of windows on the north facade are one-over-one-light double-hung wood sash, as are four openings on the west facade and four corner openings on the east facade. These replaced the original

two-over-two-light sash that remain intact in the four south-wall windows. All openings are framed with a plain, pedimental architrave trim that echoes the front door surround. A triangular attic window in the front facade contains decorative glazing.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Gable-front with asphalt shingles.
- b. Eaves: Boxed, frame and plain.

- C. Site: Located on a corner site east of downtown Saltsburg and the canal/railroad right of way, the Wray House faces north, set amid a mixture of detached historic and modern residences.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Old Views and maps:

The collection of the Saltsburg Branch, Historical and Genealogical Society of Indiana County, Stone House Museum, contains numerous historical images.

Beers, F.W. Atlas of Indiana County. New York: F.W. Beers and Co., 1871.

Johnson, George B., and Palmer, Ann. Saltsburg--The Way It Was--An Appreciation. Indiana, Pa.: A.G. Halldin Publishing Co., 1986.

Peelor, David, and Barker, W. "Map of Indiana County, Pennsylvania." North Hector, New York: 1856.

"Saltsburg, Pa." New York: Sanborn Map and Publishing Co. Ltd., February 1886; New York: Sanborn-Perris Map Co. Ltd., October 1891, January 1897, July 1903; New York: Sanborn Map Company, April 1909, February 1927.

B. Primary and unpublished sources:

Indiana County, Pennsylvania, deed books and tax records.

C. Secondary and published sources:

Arms, C.T., and White, E. 1745-1880, History of Indiana County, Pennsylvania.

Newark, Ohio: J. A. Caldwell, 1880.

Berringer, Gloria, ed. Canal Days Sesquicentennial: 1838-1988. No publisher, 1988.

Biographical and Historical Cyclopedia of Indiana and Armstrong Counties. Philadelphia: John M. Gresham and Co., 1891; reprinted 1982.

Johnson, George. Saltsburg and the Pennsylvania Canal. Historic Saltsburg, 1984.

McCullough, Robert, and Leuba, Walter. The Pennsylvania Main Line Canal. York, Pa.: American Canal and Transportation Center, 1973.

National Register of Historic Places Inventory, "Western Division of the Pennsylvania Canal: Indiana and Westmoreland Counties." 1979/82.

Stewart, J.T. Indiana County, Pennsylvania: Her People, Past and Present. Chicago: F.W. Beers and Co., 1913.

Wallner, Peter A. "Politics and Public Works: A Study of the Pennsylvania Canal System, 1825-1857." Ph.D diss., Pennsylvania State University, June 1973.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was conducted by the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record in cooperation with the America's Industrial Heritage Project under the directorship of Randy Cooley; AIHP is an undertaking of the National Park Service, based in Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania. Recorded under the direction of Robert J. Kapsch, chief of HABS/HAER, the project was completed during summer 1988 at the HABS field office in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Project leader was Alison K. Hoagland, senior HABS historian; field supervisor was Dorothy Burlingame, University of Vermont; project historian, Kristin Belz, University of Virginia. Large-format photography is by David Ames. Editing of the final report was done by Sara Amy Leach, HABS historian.

This report was completed as part of a larger project documenting two canal towns--Saltsburg, on the Western Division of the Pennsylvania Mainline Canal, and Alexandria, on the Juniata Division--flanking the Allegheny Divide. Twenty-one reports on other buildings in Saltsburg, an overview history of Saltsburg (HABS No.

PA-5438), and of canal town development in Pennsylvania (HABS No. PA-5666) are part of the HABS/HAER collection. Twenty-two reports on buildings in Alexandria (Huntingdon County) and an overview history of Alexandria (HABS No. PA-5407) are also available. Results of the project were published as Two Historic Pennsylvania Canal Towns: Alexandria and Saltsburg, Sara Amy Leach, editor (Washington, DC: Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record, National Park Service, March 1989).